

**POINT PAPER  
ON  
CIVIL AIR PATROL COUNTERDRUG PROGRAMS**

Due to widespread interest in Civil Air Patrol's (CAP) participation in counterdrug operations, the following point paper has been prepared to better explain and define CAP's Congressionally chartered missions.

- Civil Air Patrol is unique among nonprofit aviation organizations in that it is Congressionally chartered to serve the public welfare and as such supports appropriate government agencies in carrying out their respective responsibilities.
- The U.S. Congress chartered Civil Air Patrol in 1946 and it has been designated by the IRS as a section 501(c)(3) corporation. Under federal law it is a voluntary service organization with three primary missions: aerospace education, cadet programs and emergency services. In 1948, the U.S. Congress designated CAP as the official auxiliary of the U.S. Air Force.
- No other aviation organization is (1) established by the U.S. Congress and designated by same as the official civilian voluntary auxiliary of a U.S. military service; (2) Congressionally funded within the DoD; and (3) authorized to perform flight operations assigned by the U.S. Air Force.
- In 1985, U.S. Customs Service asked CAP to support counterdrug operations. In 1986, Congress authorized CAP to support law enforcement for counterdrugs. In 1989, the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA)/U.S. Forest Service asked CAP to provide aerial reconnaissance for detection of illicit drugs within the United States and its territories and possessions. Because of our volunteer organizational structure and extensive aviation assets, CAP was uniquely suited to respond. Since that first year, flying hours for counterdrug purposes have increased from 500 to nearly 42,000.
- The mission of Civil Air Patrol's counterdrug program is to assist federal, state and local government and law enforcement agencies involved in the fight to eliminate illicit drug use, production and sale in the United States, its territories and possessions. CAP is involved in both the drug demand reduction and supply interdiction of illegal drugs. CAP provides aircraft, aircrews, and other personnel to support counterdrug activities.
- CAP provides three main interdiction missions (aerial reconnaissance, transportation, and communications) in support of the Department of Defense, Drug Enforcement Administration, U.S. Customs Service, U.S. Forest Service U.S. Coast Guard and other federal, state and local agencies contributing to the nation's counterdrug efforts.
- The following is a list of some of the ways CAP may be employed in CD missions:
  - Aerial reconnaissance of potential drug operations.
    - Aerial photography using digital cameras and single-frame video downlink systems.
    - Reconnaissance in isolated areas known to be utilized by drug traffickers.
    - Aerial reconnaissance for suspicious agricultural growth.
    - Reconnaissance to locate and map clandestine and uncharted airfields.
    - Aerial reconnaissance associated with marine operations.
    - Identify and photograph airfields (with the use of digital photography and single-frame video).
    - Periodic checks of dry lakebeds used as landing areas.
    - Routine reconnaissance of coastal areas to identify and report suspicious activity.
    - Aerial reconnaissance of border crossing areas.
  - Transportation of agents, evidence, witnesses, confiscated items, documents, parts, etc.
  - Serving as an aerial communications platform in remote areas.
  - Distributing "Drug Awareness" information.
  - Directing law enforcement personnel to crash sites of drug-laden aircraft.
- CAP's role in counterdrug operations is limited as follows:
  - Assistance is restricted to aerial reconnaissance, transportation, and communications support. CAP ground teams will not participate in these missions. CAP cadets will not participate in these missions in any capacity.
  - CAP members will not be deputized and no weapons of any nature may be possessed or used by CAP members while supporting this mission.

- CAP resources will not be used to transport prisoners.
- As an auxiliary of the United States Air Force, CAP must adhere to the restrictions of the Posse Comitatus Act. Under this Act, CAP members may not participate directly:
  - In arrest, search and seizure, stop and frisk, or interdiction of vehicles.
  - In surveillance or pursuit.
  - As informants, undercover agents, or investigators in civilian legal cases or in other civilian law enforcement activity.
- CAP operates the largest general aviation fleet in the world with over 4,400 aircraft (530 corporate and 3,900 member-owned). It has over 2,700 trained and screened counterdrug pilots and 1,700 trained and screened counterdrug support personnel. CAP's extensive communications system has over 15,000 fixed-land station and mobile radios. It owns nearly 1,000 ground vehicles. CAP developed single-frame video downlink capability for counterdrug and emergency services to provide its customers real-time pictures to make decisions.
- Only adult members of CAP may participate in counterdrug activities. Counterdrug participation requires a minimum 2-year CAP membership, members must be mission qualified in emergency services (search and rescue/disaster relief), and submit to an FBI fingerprint screening as well as DEA and U.S Customs Service screening and training.
- CAP counterdrug pilots, scanners and observers must be qualified and current in search and rescue/disaster relief missions. Pilots must have at least 200 hours as pilot in command. Extended over-water flights require pilots to have 250 hours as pilot in command and a current instrument rating or at least 500 hours of pilot in command time. To fly in mountainous terrain, pilots must complete additional specialty training in mountainous terrain search procedures.
- CAP flies over 130,000 hours per year operating the world's largest fleet of civil aircraft and its safety record is 3 times safer than general aviation.
- With the budget cuts in federal agencies over the past several years, CAP has taken on a much larger role in counterdrug flight operations. As with the search and rescue/disaster relief missions CAP performs, use of CAP in the counterdrug program contributes significantly to reduce the expense to the taxpayer. CAP can field an aircraft with highly trained but unpaid volunteer aircrews for approximately \$88 per hour, compared to at least \$1,600 to \$2,200 per hour for active-duty, reserve or guard military assets (Blackhawk helicopter or C-130).
- Funding for CAP's counterdrug activities is provided through the USAF DoD budget. Therefore, CAP provides counterdrug support at no cost to the customer. Each year CAP identifies targets that result in law enforcement confiscating or eradicating of a tremendous amount of illegal drugs.
- CAP's drug education and prevention efforts are accomplished through its Drug Demand Reduction (DDR) program. This program presents the CAP Cadet Program and its Middle School Initiative (MSI) as alternatives to drugs, gangs, and violence. CAP also partners with Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America and several other agencies to assist in local community and national anti-drug activities and outreach programs.
- MSI places CAP cadet squadrons or flights into schools during the day or as an after-school activity. It reaches students in a manner that teaches leadership, aerospace education, respect, manners and accountability while developing their potential as tomorrow's leaders. It is an activity-filled environment that attracts young people to do positive things that benefit themselves and their communities. MSI succeeds because it is designed to challenge; reinforces education; teaches team building and life skills; promotes positive experiences; develops self-confidence/leadership; and keeps youth interested/motivated. It is achieving growing success in both inner city and rural areas.
- CAP provides the lifestyle needs many children are searching for. These needs are: an extended family, discipline, positive peer pressure, and a sense of belonging. CAP's DDR program is providing long-term mentoring and encouragement to thousands of youth and helping them choose positive and productive lifestyles.
- Contact Sam Harrison or Norm Ginther at HQ CAP Counterdrug Operations at (334) 953-4494 or 2452, or Gerry Levesque at HQ CAP DDR at extension 4237 for more information on CAP's counterdrug programs.